POL ARAB-ISR
EXDIS POL 33-1 JORDAN-RIVER
POL 32-1 ARAB-ISR

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Beginning of Arab construction on upper tributary Jordan diversion works has set off intense discussion in Israel of what Israeli reaction should be. Israeli warnings to us and French they considering military action perhaps even prior to completion works have become increasingly explicit. In conjunction with recently increased tempo Arab-Israel border incidents these developments could be harbingers serious clash in area.

Since number of NATO countries have important interests in area and possibility of any armed conflict there of concern to NATO, discussion this subject in NATO would normally be appropriate. However, in such a discussion US would have to seek to steer away from problem of Near East arms supply because we would not RPT not be in position to be forthcoming on this point. With this limitation in mind, we would appreciate your view whether you consider it desirable to raise subject in NATO forum. You may wish to read Tel Aviv's EmbTel 130 to Paris for background. If you do believe subject should be discussed, we would think that first step might be to sound out British, French, and German colleagues to obtain their reaction to discussion subject in POLAD. If they also see merit in POLAD discussion, you may wish

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to suggest to POLAD chairman that topic be inscribed on an agenda sufficiently in advance for each delegation to have received instructions from capitals.

GP-3 END

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